



A good meeting guide

Location



The first thing you need to think about is where will you hold your meeting?



It needs to be in a place where people can travel to easily.



This could mean a central location in the town or if people are invited from a wider area, such as North Yorkshire, a location which is as central as possible.

Building



This needs to be big enough to fit everyone in.



You need to think about disabled access to the building, can everyone get in and out ok?



Car parking- is there a cost involved and are there enough spaces?



What are the facilities like such as toilets and kitchen? Can you take your own refreshments? Are they on the approved list from county council?



Make sure the building or room is booked in plenty of time.



Is there somewhere quiet where people can go if they need a break from the meeting?

Room lay out



You need to make sure everyone who attends can be involved in the meeting from where they are sitting.



The chairs need to be comfortable!



People need to be able to get to the toilet and move around if needed.



Think about wheelchairs being able to move around easily and space to join in group work.



You need to decide how you will set up the room. Cabaret style is good layout but this may not always be suitable depending on the meeting.



Equipment



Do you need a hearing loop and is it set up correctly?

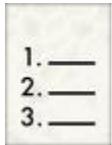


Think about if you will need-microphones or speakers, projectors or screen, laptop, flipcharts or a stand, pens, paper, extension lead.

Make sure you have enough equipment for the number of people expected at the meeting.



Have you got all of the hand outs which you need? Do you have spare copies of the agendas?



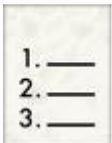
An **agenda** is a list of what you will talk about at the meeting.



Some things you will **have** to put on, like feedback and previous minutes.



Some things you will **want** to put on like a particular topic or issue.



Agenda setting meeting



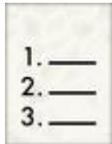
It is a good idea to have an agenda setting meeting between the 2 co-chairs and support staff if needed.



You might need an ice breaker to get everyone started, especially if people don't know each other.



If a co-chair cannot attend the meeting, they need to be able to have a say on the agenda.



You need to make sure the agenda is ready in plenty of time so that it gives people chance to look at it, at least 2 weeks before.



It needs to be in easy read and in audio if possible.



Other papers should be ready with it so that everyone can go over them, including any presentations.



It needs to have items on it which are relevant to the group and that they have said they want to discuss or find out about.



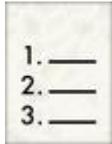
Action points need to be separate from the minutes so it is clear what has been done.



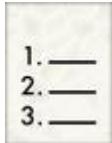
A good idea is to have group work so that people feel involved in the meeting.



Guest speakers need to be aware of how the meeting will be run and any presentations needs to be in easy read.



The agenda



Make sure everyone has an agenda and any previous minutes.



Make sure everyone has introduced themselves. You could ask people to say their name and explain what their job or role is



Make sure there is enough time for people to understand the information.



Make sure there are enough breaks for people.



Try and stick to the agenda or update people if you are running late. People need to finish at the agreed time because they may have other things to do or rely on taxis which have been booked.



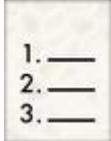
Meeting



Give as much notice as possible for the meeting. NYCC meetings are consulted with self-advocates and set a year in advance.



Remind people closer to the time about the meeting.



Meeting rules should be agreed by the group and the co chairs need to make sure people follow them.



Housekeeping. Let everyone know where the toilets are and what to do if the fire alarm goes off. You could contact the venue and ask them if there will be a fire drill. Some people who have autism get distressed if an alarm goes off. Maybe you could arrange for a fire drill to happen at another time.



It is important that if there is something on the agenda that might be upsetting, you let people know as they may not want to take part. They may need somewhere to go which is away from the meeting.



If photos or videos are taken, you need permission slips from everyone



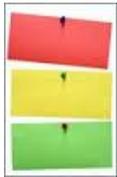
Supporters need to help people to **speak up** and **not** speak for them or give their own opinions.



Remember the aim of the meeting and what you want to achieve.



Take notice of people and if they are still engaging in the meeting. It may be worth taking a break if it is needed.



Always use the traffic light cards. This is important so everyone feels involved.



Keep people informed of other meetings and other events.



Give people chance to ask questions.

If people want to speak, make sure they have the time to do this at their own pace and answer the questions they have.



Feedback forms are important because they give people chance to say what they did and didn't like about the meeting. It should be used as a way to make future meetings better.



Have a summary at the end of each section, if it is needed.



Guest speakers



Please put any presentations into easy read. We might be able to help with this.



Use simple language and try not use abbreviations or jargon. If you do, please explain it.



Don't rush, we need time to process information.



Give us time to ask questions.



Support



Before-make sure people have had chance to look at the agenda and understand everything on it. Make sure everyone is able to get to the meeting, you may need to arrange transport and make sure everyone knows where it is. Give out a map if it is needed.



During-make sure that during the meeting people are supported to take part. This may mean helping them to follow the agenda or have the correct papers in front of them. We need support staff so we have our voices heard, please don't speak for us.



After-offer support to follow up and work that has come from the meeting or to discuss any part of the meeting.



Word banks-these are there to help people to understand some difficult words. We may need time to look them up and it is really important that you bring them to each meeting.